Violence and sexual abuse in schools

2849. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of cases of violence and sexual abuse have been noticed in schools recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the steps Government is taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Stray incidents of violence and sexual abuse of students in schools have been reported in the media education being a concurrent subject, school education primarily comes under the purview of State Governments. Details of violence and sexual abuse in schools are not centrally maintained in this Ministry.

(c) Central Government issues advisories from time to time to States/UTs to ensure safety of students. The following advisories, *inter alia,* have been issued:

(i) Advisory dated 8.8.2006 for issue of appropriate guidelines to ensure safety of girls in schools against sexual abuse.

(ii) Advisory dated 17.12.2007 for prohibiting corporal punishment in schools.

Free education to poor muslims

2850. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under active consideration of the Union Government to provide free education for poor muslim minority students upto the last standard of education *i.e.* M.A./M, Sc./M. Com./Ph.D., etc. in all education institutions in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the above proposal would be helpful to minority community students in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) No, Sir. For the educational advancement of children from poor minority communities including Muslims, Government of India through the Ministry of Minority Affairs has instituted (a) Merit-cum means scholarship for professional & Technical courses, (b) Pre-matric scholarship and (c) Post matric scholarship for minority communities.

Women Reservation Bill

2851. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha has publicly announced supporting the Women Reservation Bill in case it is brought forth;

(b) whether the draft Bill is ready;

(c) whether it was a part of the agreement in the Common Minimum Programme for governance; and

(d) the thinking and preparation of Government on this subject, at present?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) There has been report in the print and electronic media about the public announcement of the Leader of Opposition supporting the Women Reservation Bill.

(b) to (d) United Progressive Alliance Government in its National Common Minimum Programme issued on 27.5.2004 has stated that it will take the lead to introduce legislation for l/3rd reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and in the Legislative Assemblies of States. Efforts have been made, by the Government in the direction of evolving political consensus on re-introduction of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament. United Progressive Alliance held a meeting of the constituents of the Alliance and the Left Parties on the 22nd August, 2005 to evolve a consensus. Subsequently, a meeting with the leaders of the National Democratic Alliance and other political leaders was held on 24th August, 2005. Three proposals relating to Women Reservation Bill were considered *inter alia* includes the proposal of the Election Commission of India which is commonly known as the Gill formula to make it mandatory for the recognized political parties to ensure putting of minimum agreed percentage for women in State Assembly and Parliamentary elections so as to allow them to retain the recognition with the Election Commission as political parties. All proposals including Gill formula are under consideration of the Government.

Amendment in Hindu Succession Act

2852. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to amend the Hindu Succession Act;

(b) if so, the nature of proposed amendment; and

(c) by when a Bill is likely to be introduced in Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir. (b)

and (c) Question does not arise in view of the reply to (a) above.

Working days of High Courts and Supreme Court

2853. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the working days in High Courts and Supreme Court are less than those in the lower courts in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government proposes to enhance the working days of High Courts and Supreme Court for speedy disposal of cases;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when the working days are likely to be enhanced?